

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the above-identified patent application.

1. (Currently Amended) A metal strip (3) continuous casting plant (3) equipped with an ingot mould (16) and strip temperature regulation device consisting of a pair of parallel, counter-rotating rolls (2, 2') and by two closing plates at the ends of said rolls (2, 2') defining a vertical casting plane of said strip (3), wherein the strip temperature regulation device comprises at least one substantially rectangular panel (5) placed below the plane of the axis of said rolls (2, 2') and with its longest dimension substantially parallel to the axis of said rolls and at least one conduit (6, 8, 8') suitable for the passage of cooling gas ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the at least one substantially rectangular panel (5) is placed below the rolls at such a short distance from the rolls that the temperature of the strip, in the zone immediately upon exit from the ingot mould, is maintained uniform along its length ~~and in that~~ wherein at least one panel (5) is made of refractory material and is inclined at a predetermined angle of valued different from zero with respect to said vertical strip casting plane (3).

2. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein there are provided outlet nozzles (7) of said at least one conduit (6, 8, 8') adapted for spraying gas towards the strip (3).

3. (Original) The device according to claim 2, wherein said conduits (6) are formed inside said at least one panel (5).

4. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 3, wherein said at least one panel (5) has means for varying the inclination with respect to the vertical strip casting plane (3).

5. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 2, wherein said conduits (8, 8') are located externally alongside said at least one panel (5).

6. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 5, wherein there are provided more than one conduits (8, 8').

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim [[7]] 6, wherein said at least one panel (5) has means for varying the inclination with respect to the vertical strip casting plane (3).

9. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 1, wherein there are provided two panels (5) placed symmetrically at each side of said vertical strip casting plane (3).

10. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim [[9]] 8, wherein ~~said at least one panel (5) has~~ the two panels (5) have means for varying their inclination with respect to the vertical strip casting plane (3).

11. (New) A metal strip (3) continuous casting plant (3) equipped with an ingot mould (16) and strip temperature regulation device consisting of a pair of parallel, counter-rotating rolls (2, 2') and two closing plates at the ends of said rolls (2, 2') defining a vertical casting plane of said strip (3), wherein the strip temperature regulation device comprises at least one substantially rectangular panel (5) placed below the plane of the axis of said rolls (2, 2') and with its longest dimension substantially parallel to the axis of said rolls and at

least one conduit (6, 8, 8') suitable for the passage of cooling gas wherein the at least one substantially rectangular panel (5) is placed below the rolls at such a short distance from the rolls that the temperature of the strip, in the zone immediately upon exit from the ingot mould, is maintained uniform along its length, wherein at least one panel (5) is inclined at a predetermined angle of value different from zero with respect to said vertical strip casting plane (3).

12. (New) The device according to claim 11, wherein there are provided outlet nozzles (7) of said at least one conduit (6, 8, 8') adapted for spraying gas towards the strip (3).

13. (New) The device according to claim 12, wherein said conduits (6) are formed inside said at least one panel (5).

14. (New) The device according to claim 13, wherein said at least one panel (5) has means for varying the inclination with respect to the vertical strip casting plane (3).

15. (New) The device according to claim 12, wherein said conduits (8, 8') are located externally alongside said at least one panel (5).

16. (New) The device according to claim 15, wherein there are provided more than one conduits (8, 8').

17. (New) The device according to claim 16, wherein said at least one panel (5) has means for varying the inclination with respect to the vertical strip casting plane (3).

18. (New) The device according to claim 11, wherein there are provided two panels (5) placed symmetrically at each side of said vertical strip casting plane (3).

19. (New) The device according to claim 18, wherein the two panels (5) have means for varying their inclination with respect to the vertical strip casting plane (3).

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20. (New) The device according to claim 11 wherein at least one panel (5) is made of refractory material.